

MEETING MINUTES

Focus Macomb Quality of Life Committee

Citizens State Bank – Conference Room
24668 Hall Road
Clinton Township, Michigan

May 31, 2006

Members Present:

Paul Socia, President, Citizens State Bank ~ Co-Chair, Quality of Life Committee
Tony Comito, TACOM, National Automotive Center
Ken DeCock, Co-owner, Boyka's Farm Market
Tom Elias, V.P., Alion (Associate Member)
Larry Garrisi, President, Sunshine Homes
Arthur Mullen, Director, Mount Clemens DDA
Roy Rose, President, Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick
~ Focus Macomb Co-Chair
Mounir Sharobeem, President Emeritus, Judson Center

Macomb County Planning and Economic Development Staff Present:

Michael Rozny, Program Manager, Community Development Services
~ Quality of Life Staff Advisor

Members Not Present:

Karen Parteau, Marketing, Health Alliance Plan
Tom Brisse, V.P. Operations, Troy Beaumont Hospital
Ameldia Brown, Director, Faith & Community Health, St. Joseph Hospital
James Flom, President, Thunder Bay Pattern Works
Tom Guastello, President, Center Management
Tom Horton, Waste Management
James Kaye, President and CEO, Macomb Community Bank
Scott Kowalkowski, Business Development, Colasanti Group
David Miller, Regional V.P., Presbyterian Villages of Michigan
Karl Oskoian, Director, Communications and Public Relations, General Dynamics Land Systems
Jon Peterson, External Affairs Director, AT&T
Dana Peterson, Founding Director, Director of Fund Development, CARE House
Guy Rizzo, President, GTR Builders
Jim Safian, President, Premier Financial Credit Union
Grace Shore, President, Central Macomb Chamber of Commerce

THE MEETING WAS BROUGHT TO ORDER AT 4:00 P.M. by Co-Chair Paul Socia, who provided a brief history leading to the formation of Focus Macomb; Roy Rose elaborated further. A roundtable discussion followed to identify issues and areas to be addressed. They are as follows:

Establish an appropriate scope for the committee and define our mission.

- Recognize that those areas of Focus Macomb that are out of the scope of the Quality of Life Committee are interdependent on, and affect, the lives of the residents of Macomb County (e.g. Transportation, Education and Business Development).

Identify specific objectives from the Quality of Life Questionnaire and incorporate the perceptions and issues cited in the Gyro report, to identify the areas of involvement for our committee.

- How do we improve the perception that Macomb County is a place in which people choose to live, work and play?
 - 1) Are the negative perceptions of others in the region real, or a result of misinformation and/or misunderstandings (perceived urban legends)?
 - 2) How has the media contributed to the negative perception of the County and how can we enlist their assistance in changing our image?
 - 3) Macomb County is in fact, richly diverse in national origin, religious affiliation, and the ages of its residents. How do we convey the facts to the public?
 - 4) How do we promote the "Good Things" and address the "Improve and Change" items (see Attachment 1.)?
- What steps do we need to take now, to create a vibrant County where our children will want to raise our grandchildren?

IDEAS FOR CHANGE:

- Add County attractions and events to the County website so that they can be easily accessed by residents (perhaps from the main Macomb County Internet Home page).
- Turn our perceived weaknesses into strengths? (Example: Blue collar = strong work ethic, skilled workforce, middle-class values.)
- Promote Macomb County as a tourist destination and where other people in the region want to visit, shop and play?

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Establish the topics and issues we will address.

- Committee members are asked to rate the areas cited in the Quality of Life Questionnaire and identified under "Identify specific objectives..." (above) in their descending order of importance, so the Committee can focus on those areas we find most critical to address before October.

Establish the Committee structure.

- Do we work on topics and issues as a large group or in sub-committees to accomplish our goals?

Establish a meeting schedule through June 25 (or October)...

- Understanding that our Committee members are busy executives, an e-mail will be sent to members on June 2nd to ascertain "best times" scheduling. Members are asked to respond as soon as possible.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m., by Co-Chair Paul Socia.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kate Doyle

Attachment 1.

Good Things About Macomb County	Things to Change/Improve What can we do???
Lake St. Clair and Metro Beach	Parks
Macomb Center for the Performing Arts	Government (No County Executive ~ inefficiency in accomplishing change and growth).
The revitalization of Mt. Clemens.	Roads (both a strength and weakness) – pockets of congestion.
Freedom Hill	Growing gap between the “Haves and the Have-Nots” (predominately a north v. south County issue.)
Romeo Peach Festival (Agricultural Heritage)	Health Care for the uninsured.
Parade of Lights – Trucks, Tractors (Armada)	Absence of hi-tech jobs.
Parade of Lights – Boats on Lake St. Clair (St. Clair Shores)	Limited cultural opportunities.
Abundance of Apple Orchards (Agricultural Heritage)	North County versus South County ~ How do we (Focus Macomb, County government, educational institutions and the business community) assist communities in both areas to plan for the future and address the issues important to their residents?
Reasonably priced property and stable property values.	Lack of corporate/business support for community programs and initiatives.
Farmer’s Markets (Agricultural/Urban/Suburban Interaction)	County govt.’s lack of recognition of businesses who do support projects.
Macomb County has diverse living environments, including: rural, suburban, village and urban areas.	What are job opportunities of tomorrow?
Nautical Mile (St. Clair Shores)	We currently do not have set goals or “An end” in mind. What’s expected of County government and the business community? What’s next and how do we prioritize our goals?
Ford Estate (Lake Twp.)	
Public Safety	
Golf Courses	
Hockey/Ice Arenas	
Selfridge ANG	
Marinas	
Health Care Facilities	
Accessibility TO and FROM... areas in the region.	
Independence Day Fireworks	
Roads (both a strength and weakness)	